

News from Rep. Stephanie Herseth  
For Immediate Release  
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### **HOUSE PASSES HERSETH PROVISION TO PROTECT MEDICAID FUNDING**

Herseth "Motion to Instruct" Passes by 348-72 Margin; Instructs Conferees to Restore Medicaid Funding in Budget Conference Report

Nearly 100,000 South Dakotans Benefit from Medicaid

April 27, 2005, Washington, D.C. – The U.S. House of Representatives last evening passed a provision introduced by Rep. Stephanie Herseth to protect Medicaid funding in the upcoming Budget Conference Report. It is the first provision introduced by Herseth to receive a stand alone roll call vote on the House floor. The measure, a Motion to Instruct Conferees, seeks to restore Medicaid funding that was removed in the version of the Budget that passed the House earlier this year. The measure drew strong bipartisan support, passing by a 348-72 margin on Tuesday evening.

Herseth said, "Rural States like South Dakota rely on Medicaid to provide health care for our seniors, our children and many in our state who lack health insurance. As health care costs continue to rise, it's important that we protect Medicaid from deep and arbitrary cuts. I'm pleased that my provision passed with such overwhelming support, and I will continue to work to protect funding for the nearly 100,000 South Dakotans who depend on Medicaid."

Medicaid is the nation's public health insurance program for low-income Americans, financing health and long-term care services for more than 58 million people, including 28 million low-income children, nearly 16 million parents, and 15 million elderly and disabled individuals. The Medicaid cuts in the President's budget, and in the House Republican budget, will shift costs to the states, beneficiaries, or health care providers.

The recent House-passed budget directs the Energy and Commerce Committee to cut spending on programs within its jurisdiction by \$20 billion over five years. The vast majority of this \$20 billion in spending cuts, if not all, will likely fall on Medicaid. Herseth's Motion to Instruct advises conferees to adopt language to restore the funding, which passed the Senate, and to create a bipartisan commission to improve the Medicaid system

"Our nation's Governors have been outspoken about the need for a bipartisan reform effort, not an arbitrary budget cut that puts the entirety of the burden on the states," Herseth said. "Cutting Medicaid means that fewer South Dakotans will not have access to the medical and long-term care services they need, or they will find themselves moving further from their families in order to find an available facility. This also means the loss of jobs in our smaller communities. And it means as a nation we are failing our poor, our elderly, and our rural communities. My plan will restore this crucial funding, but also allow for a bipartisan commission to recommend ways to improve this important part of our nation's health care system."

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